

A  
SERMON  
OF  
REPENTANCE.

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A very godly and profitable  
Sermon Preached  
at Lee in Essex.

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BY  
ARTHUR DENT, Minister of Gods  
Word: Published at the request  
of sundry godly, and well  
disposed persons.

IONAH 2.8.

*They that waste upon lying vanities, forsake  
their owne mercies.*

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OXFORD,

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at the Signe of the Blue-Bible in  
Greene Arbor. 1631.

In Concerment *Arbitrii* Pont,  
G. Pakes Carmen.

**M** *Attire resipisce peccor, peccataq; lingue:  
Qui legis, aut audis, quisquis est istud opus.  
Si nova peccatis peccata prioribus addes,  
Olim hec te contra Concio testis erit:  
Hæc aliqui læta flemus sua crimina multum,  
Mutarunt mores, et nova vita placet.*

*The same in English.*

**T** Hou that dost read or heare this worke  
I wish thee to do this:  
Repent in time, and sinne forsake,  
Amend what is amisse.  
But if thou wilt adde sinne to sinne,  
Not minding to amend:  
This Sermon shall a witnesse be,  
Against thee in the end.  
Some that haue heard this read of late,  
Lamenting much their sinne:  
Haue chang'd their former manners, and  
A new life now beginne.

**A**lthough I was most unwilling that this poore tal-  
lent and travell of mine,  
should ever haue bene broached  
abroad, and come to light, both be-  
cause it may seeme as a candle light-  
ed at noone day; as also, because  
many other mens doing might  
more worthily a great deale haue  
bene published and committed  
vnto letters; yet because diuerse  
which heard it preached with a  
liuely voice were very instant, yea,  
and more then importunate with  
me to haue it published, vsing such  
reasons as I could not greatly gaine-  
say, I did at last yeeld to their re-  
quests: and so this vntimely fruit is

*To the Reader.*

come abroad to be sold in open  
markets. Let no man therefore be  
offended, that I haue not strained  
my selfe to fivē an high pitch, to  
foame out the truth of mans wile-  
dome, and to make a great shew of  
learning, by blowing the bladder  
of vanity, till it burst with swelling,  
but it is not my vie. I seeke especi-  
ally the salvation of the simple and  
ignorant: and therefore stoope  
downe to their reach and capacity.  
Therefore I beseech thee, gentle Rea-  
der, accept my good meaning:  
Reade this without prejudice, like  
it as thou profitest; so shalt thou  
have praise of God, and comfort in  
thy Conscience



# A SERMON

## of Repentance.

LUKE 13. 5.

I tell you nay, but except you repent, you shall  
all likewise perish.



On the occasion of these words of  
our Lord and Saviour Iesus  
Christ, was, because there were  
certaine that shewed him the  
Galileans, whose blood Pilate  
had mingled with their owne  
Sacrifices, that is, murdered them as they  
were sacrificing, and so their blood was ming-  
led with the blood of the beasts which were  
sacrificed. These men therefore thought that  
those Galileans were greater sinners then  
all other Galileans, because they had suffered  
such ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> and that those eightene also, vpon  
whom, the Toller of Siloam fel and slew them,  
were sinners aboue all the men that dwelt in  
Ierusalem. Wherein they did utter a secret cor-  
ruption naturally engendred on all men: that is  
very sharply to see into the sins of others, seuerely  
to censure of them, but in the meane while to  
flatter

flatter themselves, and to bee blind-fold in seeing their owne finnes. For though thou art, because the like indignities did not fall upon them, therefore they were small enough, they were not so great sinners, but rather but in the favour of God: according as many are falsely persuaded, that because they are the most lost of people, therefore they must needs be punished with his punishment: having forgotten that God doth not punish in a moderate rate here below, to punish eternally in the next world, or to favour, and rather he is best, but easily taketh heed of our prayers, as we thoughtly good, for the satisfaction and contentments of all others, and to be, as it were looking-glasses, wherein every man may see his owne face, and his owne sinnes, and that God is a severe rector of all: that all men may learne by the example of some, to tremble and beware, like parabolour they bee worthily constrained to seepe their owne finnes, and to know what they have deserved. These men which brought their newes to our Saviour Christ, had taken forth this lesson: Whereupon our Saviour is justly occasioned to correct their erroneous & sinister iudgement, and to teach them that they must not reioyce at the just punishment of others, but rather be instructed thereby to repent.

And further, to signifie that God doeth not alwayes most punish the most notorious offenders, as Murtherers, Theeves, Robbers, Whoremongers, Blasphemers, Scurrillers, Scoffers, and such like: But setteth them vnto the iudgement of the great day, and as heere setteth them against the iudges, and the iudges heere answereth them according to their doings, or not so, but except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish: As if he should say: are we all of this opinion indeed, that onely monstrous sinners are punished in this world, and others let alone? Or that the Galileans, and those eighteen vpon whom the Tower of Siloam fell, were greater sinners then all others? Doe you thinke because the same iudgements beare not sight vpon you, therefore you shall not be alway in the dark, and escape the iudgement of God? No no, you are deceived: For I say vnto you, that except you moue and labour for your sins, and fall to some agreement with God in time, you (I say, even you, which are so ready to condemn others, and iustifie your selves) shall not onely perish with the like iudgements in this present world, but be eternally condemned in the world to come. So that our Saviour in so saying, doeth thunder downe a most dreadfull sentence vpon all our heads: for hee concludeth and setteth downe,

that

that all men living upon the face of the earth, whether they be high or low, rich or poore, young or old, noble or vn noble, learned or vnllearned, simple or politicke, of what state, degree, and condition soeuer they be, living and dying without Repentance, shall perish and be damned in hell fire for ever. The scriptures are full of such thunders bolts, Iohn 3. 18. He that belieues not is damned already. And 2 Cor. 13. 5. Prooue your selues, whether you are in the Faith: examine your selues: know you not your selues that Iesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? Where the Apostle flatly setteth downe that all these which haue not Christ dwelling in their heart by faith, which is the household sister of Repentance, are no better then reprobates, cast awayes, and condemned persons. But because the most people in these dayes are grossely deceived in repentance, both concerning what it is, what it meaneth, what it worketh, what be the qualities and conditions of it, which be the causes, and which be the lets and hindrances: and also why, when, and wherefore wee should repent: therefore I haue a present intent to teach, first what is repentance: secondly, which bee her qualities and effects: thirdly, when we should repent: fourthly, wherefore we should repent: and last of all what letteth vs from repentance. Which order and me-

of teaching, although some may mistake  
 as indeed with mee it is not ordinarie but con-  
 sidering the matter I have in hand, I thinke it  
 not inconvenient. But to the matter.

Repentance is an inward sorrowing and  
 continuall mourning of the heart and Consci-  
 ence for sin, turned with faith, and both inward  
 and outward amendment. Inward in chan-  
 ging the thoughts and affections of the  
 heart, and outward in changing the words and  
 works from evill to good. This repentance no  
 doubt was in David, who when he was court-  
 ly reproved by the Prophet Nathan, and his  
 finnes laid before his eyes, did not stubbornly  
 defend them, and so iustle against God: nor yet  
 secretly excuse them, and banke them off, but  
 crieth out in the bitterness of heart, I have  
 sinned, and thereupon made the 51. Psalm. a  
 Psalm indeed full of dolour and heavinesse,  
 wherein the Prophet bewaileth his faultes, la-  
 menteth his finnes, and prayeth even for a new  
 Heart, and a new Spirit, new thoughts, new  
 affections, new promises of amendment of life:  
 so that in David we may see an inward sorrow-  
 ing, a lasting griefe (as the Booke of Psalmes  
 both euen where declare, which layeth him  
 out as it were in an Anatomy) yea, and great  
 reformation, both in inward and outward sins.  
 Here therefore behold what is Repentance.

Like.

Likewise S. Peter through infirmities having  
 denied his Lord and Master Christ, and being  
 pricked in his owne Conscience and awakened  
 with the reproaches of a people Cocks crowing,  
 went out to the Court of Pilate, with an humble  
 heart weeping bitterly, and ever after stoutly  
 professing Christ even unto the death. See  
 then what is Repentance. The Prophets, in  
 the Old Testament, exhorting the rebellious  
 Jewes unto Repentance, use commonly an  
 Hebrew Verbe, which signifies, Turne yee,  
 or Returne yee and come backe againe: by  
 the which the Prophet is meant, that like as a  
 man that is strayed farre out of his way, must  
 returne quite backe againe the contrary way:  
 So those that have strayed from the way of  
 godlinesse to the way of sinne, must come  
 backe againe as fast as ever they went for-  
 ward, and altogether change the course of their  
 life: So that Repentance is an earnest turning  
 unto God, with all your heart, soule and minde.  
 Saint Iohn Baptist, and the Apostles in the  
 new Testament, exhorting unto Repentance,  
 use the Greeke word, which signifieth a chan-  
 ging of the minde afterward, or after wit: So  
 that those which through their folly, and want  
 of former wit, have slipped into the deepe pit  
 and dangerous gulf of sinne, when they come  
 unto themselves, & have recovered their wits,

shall be wise afterward, and take heed they ne-  
uer come there againe, according to the Pro-  
uerbe: The burnt Childe, will take heed of the  
fire. By this time, I hope you see what is Re-  
pentance: It is not euer sorrow, but sorrow  
for sinne; not for some sinne, but for all sinne:  
not for an houre; but for euer: Not for a daye;  
but continually: Not for a weeke; but as long  
as wee liue. Some thinke euer sorrow is re-  
pentance, but so should Adolphins repent.  
Some thinke euer little pang for sinne is Re-  
pentance, so should Pharaoh repent. Some  
thinke all weeping and lamenting for sinne is  
Repentance, so should Eliu, Iudas and Cain re-  
pent. Some thinke euer little humbling of  
our selues is Repentance, but so should Abah  
repent. Some thinke that good workes, and  
good purposes are Repentance, but so should  
euer sicke man repent. Some thinke that a  
reformation of words and deedes are Repen-  
tance, but so should euill men repent. Some  
thinke that to cry God mercy is Repentance, &  
so should euer foole repent. You see therefore  
how many are deceived in Repentance. But if  
you wil see what it is indeed, looke backe to that  
which hath beene said before: for hee that will  
repent in good earnest, must not hang downe  
his head like a bulrush for a day onely, and so  
haue done: Nor cry from the teeth outward,



Lord haue mercy on mee, and forgiue: but hee  
 must make a backe reckoning, with diligent  
 consideration of his former life as did the Pro-  
 phet David, Psal. 119. 59. I haue considered  
 my wayes and turned my feet vnto thy Testi-  
 monies. So must euer one that meaueth to  
 repent strike aside into some corner or out-  
 place, that there hee may haue room enough to  
 beate his stone Conscience, and to make his  
 heart smart for his sinnes, by aggravation  
 thereof, and weighing all the circumstances,  
 as in the mouth of Danie: The Church of God  
 confesseth her sinnes, not lightly, but with  
 wonderfull great exaggeration, and heaping  
 vp one thing to another, So that it is not e-  
 nough to say, I haue sinned: but to say, I haue  
 most traisterously sinned, I haue most ob-  
 stinately, carelessly, and rebelliously sinned:  
 I haue monstrously offended in such a place, in  
 such a house, in such a company, on such a day,  
 in such a corner, in the darke, I committed A-  
 dultery closely, when I thought none had seene  
 me, in such a chamber I defiled my neigh-  
 bours wife, mine owne conscience doeth accuse  
 mee of it: in such and such company I haue  
 beene drunke, I haue spoken and railed against  
 Gods Word, I haue mocked the Preachers,  
 I haue spared no oathes nor filthy speech: and  
 now (O Lord) Lord, what an vgly monster

and wretched villaine am I: Here I stand  
before thy presence, all naked, blind, wounded,  
poore wretched and miserable, hauing deserved  
a thousand damnations, if thou wouldest enter  
into iudgement, and try the Law with mee.  
Therefore I beseech thee to shew pittie and  
compassion vpon mee. Anoint my wounds  
with the oyle of mercy, restore mee my sight,  
cloathe my nakednesse, enrich mee that am  
poore, strengthen me that am weake, helpe me  
that am fallen: O bid me not farewell. The  
infant overcommeth his mother with crying,  
the childe his father with weeping, and the  
seruant his master by intreaty, and wilt thou  
not be intreated O Lord: Thus, I say, if eue-  
ry man would speake in his conscience to God,  
and thus narrowly, or more narrowly examine  
himselſe, vndoubtedly he were in the way to  
Repentance.

But alas, it is a world to see how the blinde  
buzzards, and crooked Canker-wormes of  
this World goe awry from this rule, decei-  
ving themselues with the bare title and na-  
ked name of Repentance. Many (indeed) can  
talke of it, but few walke in it: many speake  
of it, but few feele it: many describe it, but  
few know it. It is hid and locked vp from  
the World, and revealed onely vnto Gods  
Childzen: many thinke they haue caught it

when they haue but the shadowe of it: It is so high that few can reach it: It is so deepe that few can come to the bottome of it: It is so narrow, that few can enter into it: So wide, that few can comprehend it: Slippery, that few can hold it: So secret, that few can finde it: Therefore my deare brethren, I beseech you let vs pray vnto our God, that hee would reueale vnto vs this mystery which is hid from the world, that we may see it, and know it, finde it, and seele it to our endlesse comfort, through Christ Iesus, which grace he grant vs.

- But now to the second point, concerning  
**1** the qualities and partes of Repentance: one especiall qualitie of Repentance is alwayes to bring with it remission of sinnes: For where true Repentance geeth before, there remission of sinnes must necessarily follow after: Not that Repentance defraucth remission of sinnes, but because when God worketh Repentance, there hee pardoneth sinnes because of his promise, as in Ezekiel 18. 17. When the wicked turneth away from his wickednesse that hee hath committed, and doeth that which is lawfull and right, he shall saue his soule aloue. And againe, Eiaſ 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the vnrighteous his own imaginations, and turne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue mercy vpon him. So here wee see to  
 inhom

whom forgiveness of sinnes, and the mercy of God belongeth : namely to the penitent sinners, to those that leaue sin, and embrace godlinesse, to those that forsake their owne wayes and imaginations, and turne vnto the Lord. And as for such as walke in their owne wayes & follow the delights of sin, without any sorrow or purpose to leaue them, they haue nothing to doe with the mercy of God: and though Iesus Christ had suffered a thousand deaths ( which could not be ) yet shall no impenitent sinner haue remission of his sins by his death, nor any other benefit of his passion: for they belong onely to his Church and chosen people here vpon earth. He therefore that is not of the Church, he that is not grafted into Christ by faith, he that is not a member of his mysticall body, can enjoy nothing by Christs death: If any man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch & withereth, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, & they burne. Ioh. 15. 16 We reade in the 26. of Deut. how God barreth all stubborne sinners from his mercy, & doeth most terribly shoof out against them, He that heareth the words of this curse, and blesseth himselfe in his heart, saying; I shall haue peace, although I walke according to the stubbornnesse of mine owne heart, thus adding drunkennes to thirst: the Lord will not be mercifull vnto him, but then the wrath of

the Lord, and his ieaiousie shall smoeke against that man, and every curie that is written in this booke shall light vpon him. So that God saith plainly he hath no mercy for such as walke in vaine delights of sin, & in the stubbornnesse of their owne hearts, adding drunkennes to this: that is, turning one horrible sin to another: yet for all that it is a wonder to see how the blinde wretches of the world deceiue themselves. For they thinke, whatsoeuer they say, whatsoeuer they doe, be it good, be it euill, whether they repent or not repent, yet they shall be saued by Christs death: as though they would make it a barre to their sin, and so worke that villany against Christ: I hope to be saued by Christs death as well as the best of them all, say some. But where is the repentance, thou miserable wretch: Dost thou thinke that Gods mercy is common to all? And Christs death a barre for thy sins? No, no, when it cometh to the upshot, thou shalt hop short. For it will proue far otherwise. For thou shalt finde Gods mercy turned into iustice, and Christs death into worme wood, because thou hast hid knowledge and chusedst not the feare of the Lord. Thus you see, my deare brethren, that Repentance must needes goe before forgiveness of sin, and where it leaureth not the way, there the gates of Gods mercy are shut vp: and this is the first  
qualitie

qualitie of repentance. It hath also another  
 condition, and that is, to alter and change men  
 from that they were before, not in substance &  
 proportion of the body, but in the qualities and  
 conditions of the minde. For whosoever hath  
 truly repented, you shall by and by see a most  
 marvellous and wonderfull change in him, so  
 that he will not doe as he hath done, nor speake  
 as hee hath spoken, nor company as hee hath  
 companied, nor play the good-fellow (as they  
 teeme it) as hee had wont to doe, nor run the  
 same exercise of riot as he was wont. And this  
 is that amazeth the world, and causeth them to  
 bristle & foame at the mouth like wild Bores,  
 and to speake evill of them that turne unto  
 God: for the world loveth his owne, and can-  
 not abide that God should plucke one feather  
 from his wings; but repentance doeth violent-  
 ly pull men out of the claws of Sathan, and  
 change them from the condition of the world:  
 for it maketh of proude, humble: of hurtfull,  
 harmelesse: of cruel, meeke: of wolues, lambs:  
 of lyons, sheepe: of adulterers, chaste libers: of  
 drunkards, sober men, of swearers, reverent  
 speakers: of haters, friends: of despisers, im-  
 bracers: of scoffers, louers: of earthly, hea-  
 venly: Diabells, Saints: all these worketh  
 repentance, Paul travelled towards Damascus  
 a Wolfe, a Persecuter, a Blood-sucker, a Ha-



tel a despiser: but ere he came there he was quite changed, and cleane of another minde: so mighty was he that met him in the way. When Iesus Christ sent downe the holy Ghost vpon his Disciples, according to his promise, there were some scoffers at Ierusalem, which mocked, and said, They are full of new wine. But the same men cried out by and by after; Men and brethren, what shall we doe to be saved?

Here was a most wonderfull and sodaine change: See then the force of repentance, when God striketh it into the heart of a man, and driueth the naile to the head (as they say) it effecteth that which all the wisdom and policy of man is not able to bring to passe; & when they haue prouled hither and thither and laid their heads together, and sought all the corners of their wits, yet can they not tell which way to turne their hand, or where to begin to change the heart of a man, and to convert him to God. Therefore repentance is stronger then all the whole world, and worketh that which all men with their naturall wits, fine heads, and deepe devices cannot compass: for the conuersion of a sinner is a worke supernatural. Here then we haue a glasse to behold our selues in, whether ever we haue repented, or no: For if we finde not this change, and alteration in vs, we haue not repented, and so consequently remaine vne-



der damnation. Therefore let every man looke vnto himselfe: for marke how much he is changed and altered from his former wicked wayes, so much hath he repented. And he that is the same man he was three, foure, eight, nay thirtie yeeres agoe, surely, surely, he hath not repented, and therefore abideth in damnation. A marvell then how these men, which never felt any change or alteration wrought in them, nay, whose Conscience telleth them that they are not changed, nor know what it meaneth, can haue hope of salvation? vnesse peradventure they beleue not this doctrine, or thinke it to be false. I will send over these men to such as haue beene in the like case they now are, and yet thought they might doe well enough for all that, although both blinde in iudgement, and corrupt in conversation. I haue knowne and doe know men, which before their conversion and inward change, were counted as honest men as euer brake bread, and as substantiall men as any could be, and as true dealers, vpright libers, good house-keepers, as any of their neighbours: yea, and they had the same opinion of themselves too: and yet notwithstanding when they haue felt repentance working this change and alteration in them, through the power of the Spirit, at the preaching of the Word: and when they haue had new hearts

giuen them to discern better, and new eyes to see better; as men come out of a dampe, haue wondered and marvelled at the palpable and grosse darkenesse they were in before, and haue burst sooth into these words that they would not be in the same case they were before, no not for all the worlds goods: for if they had died in that case, they were sure they should haue beene damned. But I pray you what case were they in before? were they not good honest men, and well accounted of, and honest liuers, and well taken wheresoeuer they came: surely they were so taken in the world; but now they think farre otherwise of themselves, their eyes being opened, and their iudgements inlightened: for now they see what they saw not before: now they vnderstand that God condemneth many whom the world iustificieth. We thinke this example should make ciuill and worldly men feare and suspect themselves, and know their owne misery before God. For those men were as good as they before their conversion, and yet afterward confessed that they were plunged to the bottome of hell and drowned in the depth of damnation. We that hath eares to heare, let him heare: and he that hath eyes to see, let him see: for if men will still sooth themselves, for all this, that they shall be saued, without feeling any change or woꝛke of repentance, it will cost

them full deere in the end. For Christs words will prooue true, that whoſoever repenteth not ſhall be damned, that is, whoſoever doeth not feele in himſelfe what is repentance and finde in himſelfe the qualities thereof, ſhall be condemned: for where repentance is, there be the qualities of repentance; and where the qualities be abſent, there is no true repentance. So that where Chriſt ſaith, Except ye repent, yee ſhall all periſh, it is all one as if he had ſaid, except you know the truth of repentance, except you can prooue unto your Conſciences the forgivenesse of your ſins, except ye feele a change and alteration in the bottomes of your hearts for all your former ſinnes waies & inſinuations, you ſhall ſurely periſh and be damned. But let vs a little further ſearch out the qualities of repentance. The Apoſtle in the 7. chap. of the 2. Epistle to the Corinthians ſetteth downe ſeven notable qualities and effects of repentance.

The firſt of them hee nameſh Care: For behold ( ſaith he ) this thing, that you have beene godly ſorry, what care it hath wrought in you: that is an earneſt ſtudy, & as it were, a taking thought to pleaſe God: for where true repentance hath once wrought, there followeth great care afterward: care ( I ſay ) to live in the obedience of God: care to keepe a good Conſcience, care to reſorme our houſholds, care to in-

struct our wives, children, and servants in the knowledge of God, care to pray with them morning and evening: and generally, care to performe all duties belonging to God: So that Repentance is not a carelesse, but a carefull thing. Let no man thinke therefore, that although they wester in carelesnesse of the flesh, & sleepe in security all the dayes of their life, yet their repentance is good enough: yea, & though they spend whole dayes, nights, moneths, and yeeres in vanities, playe and pastime, in idleness, fond delights, pleasures & voluptuousnes, in negligence of all duty, forgetfulness of God, & contempt of all good things: yet for all this they repent for their sins and hope to be saued as well as any other. But alas, how can these things stand together, to repent for sin, and to delight in sinne, to hate sin, & to love sin, to fly from sin, and to follow after sin? But these men I perceiue would faine make S. Paul a liar: for he saith, A man hath never repented except he be carefull afterward to please God, they say they doe repent, and haue repented, although they liue never so wretchedly and carelessly. But when all licentious & lewd liuers, filthy whore-mongers, beastly belly-gods, and carelesse car-tiffes, come to the kingdome of God, and are saued, then shall these men come also with them, to be saued by carelesse repentance.

The next qualitie, and effect of repentance is named Clearing of your selues, that is discharging of our selues when sin doeth accuse vs, and lay things to our charge: for when sin and Satan doe terrifie the conscience of the poore penitent sinner, by and by he flieth vnto God, and asketh forgiveness through Iesus Christ, so clearing himselfe, and making his apologie against Sinne and Satan: like as a man that is presented into the Court vpon suspicion of whoredome, or any other notorious crime, must cleare himselfe by witnes, of that which is laid to his charge; so the conscience that is cited by Satan before the iustice and Iudgement seate of God, cleareth it selfe by Repentance, and asketh forgiveness through Iesus Christ. So that here we may see a wonderfull fruit of a penitent conscience: it cannot abide the accusation of sinne, it cannot be quiet till it be reconciled vnto God, and so haue peace with it selfe. For this is to be noted in a godly man, that when he hath committed any sinne, and his Conscience telleth him of it, by and by he feeles lead within him, and is all heauy, and cannot sleepe quietly till he haue gotten into some corner, where he may mourne and lament to the full, & confesse & lay open himselfe vnto God, and cleare himselfe through Iesus Christ, his conscience bearing him witnes that his sin is forgiven. Where-

as contrariwise, the vngodly man, when his conscience accuseth him of sinne, he dispatcheth away all such thoughts, and treadeth them vnder foote: and by and by calleth for a paire of Cards or Tables, or some meere companion to drine away time, and so put out all such thoughts out of his head: and so indeede he increaseth them more and more, and causeth them to rankle inwardly.

The third qualitie is called Indignation: that is, a mortall and deadly hatred against sinne, as when a man doeth shudder and shake, and as it were grind his teeth at the remembrance of his sinnes: for this is alwayes in the penitent person, to loathe and abhorre all sinne from his heart, both his owne sinnes, and the sinnes of others, and to hate it as the diuell himselfe, which is the author of it: and to flee from it, as from the very cut-throat and hang-man of his soule, and to know it to be the onely thing that blindeth and hardeneth, that separateth from God, and procureth all plagues and diseases, both of body and soule against vs. Therefore he spitteth at it in defiance, and disdaineth it, and itoppeth his nose at the stinke of it, wheresoeuer he smelleth it.

The fourth thing is Feare, which is a certaine awe of God, when a man is afraid to displease him: for the penitent person feareth al-



wayes, and being priuy to his owne infirmities and weaknesse (when God neuer so little withdraweth his grace and leaveth him alone) worketh his salvation with feare and trembling. Hee will not presume vpon former grace to commit any sin, or flatter himselfe in the mercy of God, & the things that he hath already tasted of God, to yeeld to some little sin, thinking he may doe that and be the child of God well enough, because some of Gods children haue fallen into greater: but rather he trembleth at the least motion of sinne and is afraid of the temptation which Satan trappeth in the way, & is afraid when the temptations of sin are vpon him, to satisfie the hunger of sinne: but rather hee fighteth against sinne when sinne fighteth against him, and presenteth the feare of God before his eyes (as godly Ioseph in the assaults of Potiphers wife) to bee as it were a tower of defence, and well-spring of life to avoide the snares of death.

The fift thing is Desire, that is, hungriing and thirsting after righteousness. For the penitent man is ravished with a desire of good things: he desireth to be every day better then other, he desireth to leaue every day some sinne, he desireth to pray, he desireth new knowledge and new vnderstanding of heavenly things. He desireth to heare Sermons, and will straine himselfe



himselfe to heare them. He desireth the company of the godly, thinking himselfe in heaven when he is amongst them. He desireth salvation of his very enemies, and prayeth for them. All these, and many other such like desires, are in a penitent man.

The first qualitie is Zeale, which consisteth in the earnest embracing of vertue: and hatred of vice: so that the penitent person is zealous of every good thing, zealous of Gods glory in all places, in all companies, and amongst all persons. He cannot abide that Gods honour should be impeached, or his name blasphemed or his glory trampled under foote by wicked men: but will open his mouth to reprove the wicked, and stand stoutly in the defence of Gods glory. He is not like the Atheists and dissemblers, which are alwayes as the company, that is, godly amongst the godly, a Protestant amongst Protestants, wicked among the wicked, a Papist among Papists, a worldling amongst worldlings, and a sweaver amongst sweavers, a weather-cocke that turneth with every wind. The penitent man I say is not of that stamp: but he is constant and zealous in all good things: he is zealous both against the pleasures and profits of sinne: though he might winne a whole world, or pleasure himselfe never so much by committing sinne against God, yet he will re-

use it: for he hath learned from Christs mouth that it shall not profit a man to win the whole world, and to lose his owne soule.

The last thing is Revenge, that is, the penitent person is so offended with the sinne he hath committed, that he will be revenged of himselfe for it. As for example, if he haue offended in gluttony, he will revenge himselfe by fasting two or three dayes after. If he haue offended in whoredome, he will be revenged of his lusts by haltering and bridling of them ever after. If he haue offended in couetous catching and polling of other mens goods, he will be revenged on himselfe by restitution, as was godly & penitent Zacheus: & this indeed is a speciall fruit of Repentance, to reforme our selues in those things wherein we haue most offended. Now then we see ( my deare brethren ) what lieth in the belly of Repentance, and which be her inwards: so that we must needs now come to the unlacing and unbouelling of Christs words: Except ye repent ( saith he ) ye shall all perish: that is, except ye haue this forenamed Care, you shall all be damned: except ye haue this clearing of your selues, you shall be damned: except you haue this Indignation, you shall be damned: except you haue this Feare, you shall be damned: except you haue this Desire, you shall all be damned: except you haue this Zeale, you shall

shall all be damned: except you haue this Re-  
 venge, you shall all be damned. For our Sa-  
 viour Christ doeth not speake of the bare name  
 of Repentance, but of Repentance with her fur-  
 niture and appurtenances: so that whosoever  
 hath not repentance with all her qualities and  
 effects, or at least, some measure of them, he  
 hath no Repentance indeed, and therefore shall  
 be damned: For except you repent, yee shall all  
 perish. But mee thinketh that I heare some  
 man say: here is nothing but damnation, dam-  
 nation: you preach nothing but the Law, let  
 vs heare of the Gospell. Hy be, then, I pro-  
 test vnto you, that I speake in loue whatsoe-  
 ver I speake, I desire the salvation of you all.  
 If I could win but two of all this congrega-  
 tion, I would count my selfe happy, and think  
 that God had greatly blessed my labours. And  
 undoubtedly If I knew any neerer way to  
 bring you to God: then by preaching the Law  
 to make you know your felues, surely, surely, I  
 would vse it: Or if I could be perswaded that  
 the preaching of the Gospell, & mercy, would doe  
 you more good, you should heare of nothing but  
 Gospell, Gospell, Mercy, Mercy. But alas, I  
 see that every carelesse and ignorant man pre-  
 sumeth vpon Gods mercy. I see that every fil-  
 thy liver, and notorious blasphemour abuseth  
 Gods mercy, in applying it to himselfe without  
 repen-

repentance, so that they would make Gods mercy a cloake for their sinnes: I see that every man would faine be flattered in sinne, and heare of it no more, but haue the Gospel preached, which indeed belongeth not vnto them, continuing in their stubboznesse: But onely to the penitent sinner which forsaketh himselfe and groaneth and panteth vnder the burden of his sinne. Therefore when I see you humbled with the conscience of your sinnes, and groane and pant vnder the burthen of them: when I see your faces blubbered with weeping, and your hearts mollified, and sorrowing with care, then will I comfort you, and cease to preach the Law. But I pray you, will you steale, murder, and commit adultery, and yet heare of mercy? Will you mocke, sweare, blasphemie, and raille, and yet heare of mercy? Will you serue sinne, hate vertue, and follow your owne lusts, and yet heare of mercy? Would you haue plaisters before you haue wounds? Would you haue physicke before you be sicke? Would you be let blood before you haue neede?

Would you not account him a foolish Physician, that will minister Physicke to a whole man? Would you not thinke him an unskilfull Chirurgion that will apply a gentle salue to an old festered sore, and not rather cozzie it? Then know you my brethren, that because you

are full of grosse humors, you must haue strong purgations, because you are full of old festered wounds, you must haue corrasive salues: for that is best for you, and the speediest way to recover your health: and forasmuch as you be rough horses, you must haue a rough rider, and hard knotty timber must haue hard wedges, & hard strokes with a beetle. We preach the law, to drue you to Christ, we preach iudgement, to make you to seeke mercy, we preach damnation to bring you to salvation. But to preach mercy and forgiveness before men see their sins, or know their misery by the preaching of the law, is to preach the Gospel vnprofitably: for he that is ignorant of the Law, knoweth not what misery is in himselfe, or what mercy is in God.

That father is there, who if his child should play the stubborne boy, and disobey him in euery thing hee commandeth, would stroke his head, and say he were a good boy? & not rather severely correct him, and whip him with a rod? That master will commend his seruant for doing what he list, and not what he commandeth him: Euen so we may not disobey, and doe evil, and looke to be flattered too, & not rather chidden. Let vs know then, that though God vse searing, lancing, or corring, and searching of the bones, and other violent remedies: yet in the meane while he procureth our health by them.

them. And vs further vnderstand, that forasmuch as there is no other meanes to draw vs to salvation, but by the cleansing of all our vices, & the same cleansing cannot be done but by violence, when we be warned by the doctrine of the law, so as our owne consciences accuse vs, although we like well to be now and then flattered and soothed, yet let vs seeke to be spoken vnto earnestly, to haue our faults told vs, and to be made ashamed of them, & to haue our dishonesty discovered, and not desire to be pleased: for it were next way to make vs rot in our owne filthynesse, if we should hold it in secret: and it would cost too deare the setting on, if we should be so flattered by men, and in the meane season the heavenly Iudge, thunder downe vpon vs.

Therefore, when any man cometh to a Sermon, let him first and foremost make his reckoning to be rebuked, as meet it is, and let him vnderstand that it is for his profit that he is not soothed. And if he haue itching eares, let him lay them away from him, assuring himselfe else, that he is fore-closed, so shall he neuer receive the doctrine to his profit and instruction: and let him be content to haue his soares rubbed and bewrayed, that he may be wrought to that which is for his wel fare. If any man please a sicke body, what shall become of him? Shall he giue him drinke every minute of an  
C  
houre?



heere : Shall giue him wine , whereas hee  
 should giue him water : Shall he giue him sal-  
 lets : it were the next way to poyson him . To  
 be short, it is certaine that a man doth alwayes  
 seeke his owne death, when he would haue men  
 to sooth him. But now, which is better : either  
 that he which hath the ordering of a sicke man,  
 should yeeld to all his desires , or that he should  
 brydle him, notwithstanding that he chafe and  
 gnash his teeth, because hee may not haue his  
 will in his desires? You see therefore how dan-  
 gerous a thing it is to flatter and raise vp men  
 with the preaching of Mercy, before they haue  
 beene cast downe with the sense of Gods iudge-  
 ment . Cease therefore to open your mouth , to  
 make hue and cry over the Countrey , sayings;  
 They Preach nothing but the Law, the Law,  
 Damnation Damnation; vlesse you will  
 take in Christ too, and make him one of the  
 number and accuse him of want of wisdom,  
 because he preacheth and cryeth out , that who-  
 soeuer repenteth not, shall be condemned . For  
 my part , I preach the Gospel to whom the  
 Gospell belongeth, and the Law to whom the  
 Law belongeth, and iudgement to whom iudg-  
 ment appertaineth . And therefore hold your  
 peace, and bee content to bee ruled by the wise-  
 dome of God . But now let vs proceede to the  
 third general point, which is the time when we  
 shall



shall repent. The holy Ghost in the Scriptures pointeth vs to the present time, and exhorteth vs to make that the time of our Repentance: Ioe! 2. 12. Therefore also now the Lord saith: Turne you vnto me withall; your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; Likewise, in the 3 chap. to the Hebrews: Exhort one another, while it is called to day, lest any of you bee hardned, through the deceitfulness of sin. And in the same chapter: To day if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. So that now, even now, even now is the time of repentance.

Now while hee calleth, now whilst he speaketh, now whilst hee knocketh; let vs now therefore heare; let vs now therefore obey, let vs now therefore redeeme this day, this present Wednesday, which haue foreclosed so many dayes, which haue so long hardned our hearts, which haue let so many good things runne out and spill besides: let vs take vp this day, and make it the day of our Repentance. Although wee could neuer be moued with any Sermon hitherto, yet let vs now be moued once at last. Let vs now say, this shall be my day of repentance, I will deferre it no longer, but now will I turne vnto my God, & forsake all my former wicked wayes, & mine owne imaginations: I will now change the course of my life, & begin

a new againe. I will be acquainted with Gods word, and take counsell there how to doe, how to behaue my selfe in every action, I will not onely reforme my selfe, but also my whole household: wife, children, and servants according vnto the same. Thus my deare brethren, I beseech you, purpose in your hearts without any further delay: and be not like to Epicures & slack-graces, which say, Youth will be youthfull, and youth will haue a course, and what should we make it so holy when we are yong? tush, there needes but a sigh an houre before death, let vs be merry now, we shall neuer be yonger, we will repent when we are old. As if (poore soules) they had Repentance in their sleeues, and at their commandement, and that they could repent when they list. No, no, these fellows shall pay for their presumption: For God will giue them over to hardnesse of heart and impenitency, because they tooke so much vpon them, and made so long delayes, that in the meane season they might enioy the profits and pleasures of sinne. Therefore (good brethren) let vs not put it off from day to day, but let vs now seeke the Lord whilst he may be found, and call vpon him whilst he is neere: let vs take time while time is, for time and tide waiteth for no man: Let vs know this to be the time of our visitation. Our Saviour Christ wept over Ierusalem because

because they knew not the time of their visitation. Hee reprooued the Jewes, because they could descerne the face of the skye, but could not discern the signes of the times. And surely in the end it will turne to our destruction, if we will not know this to be the day of mercy, the time of grace, wherein God stretcheth forth his hand vnto vs, & wisdom creeth out in the streets. Therefore now while we haue the light, let vs walke as children of the light: the night commeth when no man can worke. It shall be too late to call for mercy after this life, when the gates of mercy are shut vp, and repentance will be too late. Oh deare Christians, let vs remember the five foolish virgins, which because they ouer slowd the time, had heauen gates barred vp against them. Let vs also remember the fearefull and dolefull example of the rich Glutton, which being in hell torments, yelled and yelped for the least ease and helpe that might be, and could not haue it. An hundred thousand times therefore better it is for vs, to leaue our sinnes now, to mourne for them now, & now to repent, then hereafter (alas) when it shal be too late: better now a great deale to take some paines, to steine our selues to leaue our sinnes, and to make our hearts smart for them, then to bee condemned for euer, and to cry in the bottome of hell: Wee haue wearied our

selues in the way of wickednes and destruction  
 and we haue gone through dangerous wayes,  
 but we haue not knowne the way of the Lord.  
 What hath pride profitted vs? Or what profit  
 hath the pompe of riches brought vs? All these  
 things are passed away like a shadow, and as  
 a Poste that passed by. We haue set our selues  
 against the children of God; wee haue had them  
 in derision, and in a parable of reproach: Wee  
 fooles thought their lues madnesse, & their end  
 with dishonour: but so, they are counted amongst  
 the children of God, & their portion is amongst  
 the Saints: Therefore let vs know the time of  
 our calling, and let vs not bee worse then the  
 fowles of the ayre: the Turtle, the Crane, and  
 the Swallow, obserue the time of their com-  
 ming, the husband-man taketh his time, the  
 Mariner watcheth his tides: Therefore let vs  
 also take the time, and turne to the Lord, whilst  
 it is said to day; which grace God grant vs.  
 Now let vs returne to the fourth point, concer-  
 ning the causes which may moue vs vnto re-  
 pentance. Wherein I haue observed nine speciall  
 things.

First, the great mercy of God leadeth vs vn-  
 to repentance, as Rom. 9. The bountifulnesse  
 of God leadeth vs vnto repentance, saith the  
 Apostle: God doth continually fellow vs with  
 his mercies and benefits, both concerning our  
 soules

soules and bodies, we haue no good thing which we haue not receiued at his hands, we hold all that we haue, of him, & to him we are beholding for all: great is his mercy towards our bodies, and every mercy & benefit either towards soule or body calleth vs to repentance: hee giueth vs meat, drinke, and cloathing, these call vs to repentance: hee keepeth vs at his owne cost and charges here below, this calleth vs to repentance: the Sun, the Moone, and the Stars call vs vnto repentance: the birds of the ayre, the fishes of the Sea, and the fountes of the earth, cry out vpon vs both loud and shrill, Repent, repent: All creatures moue vs vnto repentance. Our creation calleth vs, our Redemption cryeth, our Sanctification knocketh, and our Election moueth vs to repentance: What could God doe more for his Vineyard that hee hath not done: Therefore let vs repent.

Secondly, the iudgements of God moue vs vnto Repentance: for all the Thunder-bolts, Plagues, and punishments, which God hath throwne downe vpon obstinate sinners, from the beginning of the world, are so many warning peeces vnto vs, to awake vs out of the dead sleep of sin, and to pricke vs to repentance. As in 1 Cor. 10. When the Apostle had cited diuers great iudgements of God against the old Israelites for diuers sins, hee concludeth:

Now all these things came vnto them for examples, and were written to admonish vs, vpon whom the ends of the world are come. So that all the iudgements were read of in the Scriptures, are as so many admonitions, and as it were Cart ropes to draw vs to Repentance. All the iudgements were read of, seeker, and heare of every day, knocke with many strokes, beate downe right vpon our consciences to repentance. The vniuersall plagues, strange luths, and fiere conflagrations, unknowne comets, so daime deaths, marvellous droughts, vnwonted snowes, horrible inundations, foraine wonders, strange apparitions, threatnings of heauen above, with flaming and shooting fire, trembling of the earth vnder our feete, and our houses ouer our heads, as of late dayes: What are all these, but as it were great Cables with beames and Cable ropes to draw vs to the Lord by repentance.

Thirdly, the word of God helpeth vs to repentance: For as God in the old time sent his Prophets both early and late, to call the rebellious Jewes to repentance; so he sendeth abroad the Preachers and messengers in these dayes to sound vp the Trumpet of his Word, and to ring the sweete Bells of Aaron amongst them, to awake them to repentance: but alas, how lightly are they regarded? Who heareth their  
their



their voyce? But surely this is the last remedy that God hath appointed: and if this will not mooue vs to repentance, if this will not cure vs, then are we altogether vncurable.

Fourthly, the infinite number of sinnes we haue committed, ought to be so many spurres in our sides to pricke vs to repentance. It is sufficient (saith S. Peter) that wee haue spent the time of our life after the lusts of the Gentiles, walking in wantonnesse of lusts, drunkennesse, gluttony, drinkings, and all abominable idolatries. Now therefore it is time to repent. Oh that men would looke backe to themselves, as they were fortie, thirtie, twentie, or ten yeeres agoe. Oh that they would call to minde their open and secret sinnes, & we thinketh it should make their hearts bleed within their bellies to thinke vpon them: Oh that they would consider how much time they haue misspent, and how many good things, they haue neglected, and altogether omitted.

Fifthly, the shortnesse of our life calleth earnestly vpon vs to repent. The time of our life is firtie yeeres and ten, and if they liue to eigh- tie yeeres, yet is their strength but labour and sorrow, and so it is cut off quickly, and we flye away, saith the Prophet David: We haue spent our yeeres as a thought, therefore hee addeth, Teach vs to number our dayes, that wee may apply



apply our hearts to wisdom. Our life, for the shortnesse and inconstancie of it, in the Scriptures, is compared to grasse, to a vapour, to smoke, to a weavers shuttle, which glideth away swiftly. Even so the dayes of men passe away, no man knoweth how. Man is of a short continuance (saith Iob) and full of trouble. Experience teacheth vs, that to day a man, to morrow none. Hence away we must all, here is no abiding place for vs: how soone we know not, Therefore let vs repent.

Sixtly, the small number of those which shall be saved, ought to thrust vs forward to repentance. Strive to enter in at the narrow gate: for many (I say vnto you) will seeke to enter in, and shall not be able, saith Christ, Luke 13, 24. And in another place he saith, The gate is strait, and the way narrow that leadeth vnto life, and few there be that finde it. If men should consider of this, it should make them looke better about them, and say with themselves whether they be of that small number or no.

Seventhly, Death threatens vs, which is very terrible to the flesh, and the remembrance of it very bitter to a man that is souled and soked in the pleasure of this World. It flattereth no man, it regardeth no person, it weigheth no friendship, it careth not for rewards, it is very grim, ugly, and cruell, and killeth downe right  
where

where it hitteth. Therefore let vs repent.

Eighthly, the day of iudgement and second appearing of the Son of man. He will come as a theefe in the night, in the which the heauens shall passe away with a noyse, and the Elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the workes that are therein shall be burnt vp. Seeing therefore that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conversation, and godlinesse: saith S. Peter 2. 3. The Lord Iesus shall shew himselfe from heauē with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, rendring vengeance vnto them that know not God, and obey not the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ saith the Apostle, 1 Thess. 1. I saw (saith Iohn Reu. 20.) a great white throne, and one that sat on it, from whose face fled away both the earth and the heaven, and their place was no more found. And I saw the dead, both great and small, stand before God, & the bookes were opened, and another booke was opened, which is the booke of life, and the dead were iudged of those things which were written in the bookes, according to their workes, and the Sea gaue vp her dead which were in her, and death and hell delivered vp their dead which were in them; and they were iudged every man according to his workes.

In these places we see both the suddennesse,  
the

the fearefullnesse & glory of Christs coming.

For he shall not come poore and contemptuously, as in the first visitation, but he shall come very princely, royally, and triumphantly, to the great terror of his enemies, when a consuming fire shall goe before him, and ten thousand thousands of Angels waite vpon him; at what time the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines, and the mighty men, & every bond-man, and every free-man shall hide themselves in dens, and among the rockes of mountaines, and say to the rockes and mountaines, fall on vs, and hide vs from the presence of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand? Revel. 6. Therefore let vs repent.

The last thing is Hell torments, then the which nothing is more intollerable. Therefore saith Christ, Matth. 9. If thine hand cause thee to offend, cut it of. it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, then hauing two hands, to goe into hell, into the fire that never shall bee quenched, where the worme dyeth not, and the fire never goeth out. The Scripture speaketh terribly to our senses concerning the estate of the damned persons, calling it hell fire, damnation, the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for ever. In the thirtieth Chapter of the  
 Prophecie

Propheſie of Eſay, it is called Tophet, and is even prepared of old, it is even prepared for the King, he hath made it deepe and large, the burning thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord, like a river of brimſtone, doeth kindle it. Theſe ſpeeches are terrible in themſelves, and very marveilouſly amaze vs. But if I had the tongues of an hundred men, nay of an hundred Angels, yet were I not able to vtter them, as ſome (one day) ſhall feele them, much leſſe were you able to conceiue them. If all the tortures and cruell torments that can be deviſed by the wit of man, were executed vpon ſome one, yet were it nothing to this. Wee poore wretches thinke there is no paine to a cholicke, or a cruell ague: But if all cholickeſ, agues, and other ſtrange diſeaſes, could poſſibly light vpon one man, it were but a ſlee-biting to that which is to come. The paine is endleſſe, eaſeleſſe and remedieleſſe. The dayes of their heliſh torments ſhall neuer weare out, nor their yeeres come to an end, the longer they continue, the leſſe hope they haue: when as many yeeres be expired as there be men in the world, and ſtarres in the heauens: when as many thouſand yeeres are ended, as there be ſtones and ſands by the Sea ſhore, yet ſtill there bee ten hundred thouſand times ſo many more to come. Thoſe that will not now be moued in hearing,  
ſhall

shall then be crushed in pieces in feeling. All Drunkards, Swearers, Whore-mongers, Usurers, Tortioners, Lyars, Mockers, Contemners, Secure persons, Jolly-fellowes, Rousing Russians, Lusty-bloods, the braue lads of the World, and all other unbelieuers, shall one day be apprehended, and arraigned before the Barre of Gods Tribunnall-seate, where the Maiestie of God shall stand aboue them with a naked Sword of Vengeance, and a Scepter of Justice: the Diuell, that old Sathan, shall stand on the one side to accuse them, and their owne consciences on the other side to condemne them; and the gasping gulfe of hell underneath them, ready to swallow them vp for evermore. Then shall the dreadfull sentence of eternall woe and damnation proceed against them, Goe yee cursed into hell fire, &c. There they shall drinke (as iust recompence of their iniquitie) the bitter cup of Gods eternall wrath and indignation in the kingdome of darkness, and in the fearefull presence of Sathan, and all the cursed enemies of Gods grace: where the dolefull Drumme of Gods anger shall ever sound through their eares, where shall ever be weeping and gnashing of teeth: where shall be confusion, woe, and endless lamentation: their gripes shall be so great, their groanes so deepe, and their garboiles so intollerable, that they shall

shall grin like a dog in their infernall convulsions, and with howling and yelling cry out, wo and alas that ever I was borne: And that I had never beene borne, or that my mother had borne me a toad: so, then my condition should haue beene better then it is: cursed was the time I was begot in, the houre I was conceived in, & the day I sucked my mothers paps: cursed I was alwayes, cursed I am, and cursed I shall be evermore: Wo, wo. how great is my torment: Whose heart doth not melt: Whose eares do not glow: Whose haire do not stand upon his head to heare these things: Therefore (deare brethren) let vs repent. If the mercy of God cannot allure vs, let his iudgements scare vs: If his iudgements cannot scare vs, let the word moue vs: If the word cannot moue vs, let our sins amaze vs, if our sins cannot amaze vs, let the shortnes of our life dampe vs: If the shortnes of our life cannot dampe vs, let the small number of those that shall bee saved asray vs: if that cannot asray vs, let death terrifie vs: If death cannot terrifie vs, let the day of iudgement shake vs: If that cannot shake vs, let hell torments shudder vs and rend vs in peeces. For verily ( my brethren ) if none of all these can prevaile, if wee will not for all this repent, but bee still obstinate, then wee shall all perish, and bee damned, according to



to Christs words. Now let vs proceed to speak of those things which hinder from repentance: which indeed, although they be in number infinite, yet at this time I will lay forth seven speciall lets and hinderances vnto repentance.

The first is vnbeliefe: that is, when men will not belecue such things which are spoken and proued vnto them out of the word of God: that is it that vomiteth vp all good things, and poysoneth the very intrayles of a man, and keepes all good graces from vs, as appeareth, Matth. 13. 38. He did not many great workes there for their vnbeliefes sake: and in the fourth Chapter to the Hebrewes it is said: vnto them was the Gospel preached, as also vnto vs: but the word that they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixt with faith in those that heard it. So that heere wee may see, although we heare neuer so much, yet if wee bring not faith with vs, we shall neuer profit vnto repentance: For vnbeliefe taketh vp our hearts for Satan, and refuseth all the wholesome doctrine of Salvation. and doeth so harden men in the wayes of sinne, that in the end they become past feeling, and cannot be touched one whit, either with the iudgements or mercy of God, but count the one as blaits of winde, and make the other a covert for their filthinesse. You shall note some men, who when they haue heard  
their



their finnes straightly ripped up by the Word  
of God, and their iust damnation proued by the  
same, without speedy and earnest repentance,  
will breake out into these words of unbeliefe:  
If this be as he saith, God helpe vs, I hope it  
is not so: I trust I shall do well enough for all  
this, as long as I haue a good faith in God,  
and do no body no harme: Shall I leaue my  
pleasures and my profite for their saving?  
What? doe they thinke none shall be saued,  
but such as read the Scriptures, and heare  
Sermons? God forbid, but those which do not  
go to heare Sermons, should be saued as well  
as they: who, may not one serue God as well  
at home in his house, hauing good Bookes and  
good Prayers, as by coming to the Church  
to heare sermons and Service? Alas: these  
men stand too much in their owne light, and  
bewray what folly and ignorance is in them.  
For so they thinke to bee saued by any other  
meanes then God hath appointed: or when  
God hath abouched any thing in his word,  
will they except against it, and so make God a  
liar: When God hath once set downe a thing,  
and proued it to their faces, will they yet re-  
ply, when God hath told vs, that the preaching  
of the word is the ordinary meanes of our sal-  
uation, shall we hope to be saued, though wee  
contemne it, and neuer (or very seldome) heare

it : Is not this plaine infidelity and unbelieve, that when God saith one thing wee will say another: when God saith yea, we will say no, I hope not so: Yea surely, that is it that stoppeth the way to Gods graces, and barreth vs out from repentance.

The second let, is, the presumption of Gods mercy: for if men be sharply reprov'd for their sin, and exhorted to repentance, by and by they talke couertly, saying; God is merciful, God is mercifull: as though God were made all of mercy, and that there were no iustice in him at all. And thus the wicked make Gods mercy an occasion to sinne. Which thing the Prophet Nahum in the first of his Prophecy doth sharply reprove: The Lord (saith he) is slow to anger, but he is great in power, & will not surely cleare the wicked. But because I haue spoken before of this presuming and misapplying of Gods mercy, I will here passe it over, and willing you to note it as one speciall let vnto Repentance.

The third hinderance is, the example of the multitude: for that doth hearten and embolden men vnto sinne: as when many Birds flicker and flocke together, they fall vpon the baite without any feare; but one or two alone will be afraid: even so the examples of many sin-companions doe embolden men to run through  
the

the snares of Sathan, without any mistrust. Therefore it is said in Exod, 23. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do euill. This is the thing which hindereth a great number from God: for they neuer look vp vnto God, or to his word, but stare vpon the common doings of most men, and examples of the world: thinking if they doe as the most men doe, and as their fore-fathers haue done before them, they are rocke sure, and on an even ground. And there-vpon ariseth their deuillish Proverbe; Doe as the most mē doe, and the fewest will speake ill of you. But they haue forgotten Saint Pauls rule, Rom. 12. Fashion not your selues like vnto this World. These fellowes that stand vpon multitudes, will reason thus: We see none of the great ones of the world, none of the Noble, none of the Rich, none of the wise and prudent receiue this doctrine, but onely a few shake-raggies, and beggarly Wascals; and therefore it is a token that it is nothing worth, and that it is doubtfull, and not for vs to meddle withall. Loe what thoughts may creep into our heads and how sily Sathan may trumpe in our way, and blind-fold vs, and lead vs away in the darke, by doting vs with the example of the multitude. Therefore let vs take heede of those pit-fals which Sathan layeth in our way, and not be carried away with those thoughts

and reasons. The wisdom be in the people's hand, that they shall come to know, and that the pole doth cut three parts, & there is nothing but crowing long time, it be not, & great humming among the people. Our broke be gotten and that because we are out a handfull of people, and there a great multitude, and that in a manner the whole world is covered with them, as people of our death. Thus the devil both call a man before him, & so he leads him away from repentance. There fore beere be a sign, let us stand fast in the word of the Lord, & we be carried away, and bowed quite down with the running of the multitude, but let us know it to be one special manner of Satan, where he draweth us from repentance.

The fourth let unto repentance, & let us be from of home, for that taketh away all the feathers of sinne, and make that as it were out of the. Let us be unto us, so that we may as well all of us as make it off, when it is once thus founded into us, then it is our custome. Therefore it is said, Jer. 13. 23. Can the black Moore change his skinner, or the leopard his spots? Then may you all do good that are accustomed to do evill. There the prophet affirmeth that it is as hard to cure an old disease that is bred in the bones, and to remove a sin that hath beene hatched and brought up with us, as

to wash a Black Doore white, or to change the spots of a Leopard, which cannot bee without destroying of nature. And surely, try it who will he shall finde as hard a matter to leave an old custome whether it bee of swearing, of gaming, of lying, of whoring, of evill company, or any other sinne, as to wash an Ethiopian. Therefore it is written, Proverb. 27. Though thou shouldst bray a foole in a mortar, among Wheate brayed with a Pestell, yet will not his foolishnesse depart from him. So that as long as we are in custome with sinne, the doore of repentance is barred against us.

The fift hindrance is, long escaping of punishment. for the wicked thereby are hardened in sinne, and driven off from repentance: every as an old theefe that hath stolen a long time, and escaped both prison and gallows, is animated more boldly to proceed in his wickednes, thinking hee shall so alwayes escape: So many filthy and loose libers goe forward in their abomination without repentance, thinking that because God doth not incontinently punish them, and shew some manifold iudgement and signe of his wrath upon them, therefore they shall be acquitted for altogether. Whereas contrariwise, if God should by and by strike them downe as soone as they had sinned, by thundering upon one; and lightening upon another,  
and

and raining fire and brimstone vpon the third, it would make them afraid. Wherevpon it is said in 2 Pet. 3. 2. 4. This first vnderstand that there shall come in the last daies, mockers which will walke after their lusts, and say: where is the promise of his comming? For since the Fathers dyed, all things continue alike from the beginning of the Creation. But let these men well know, that when God hath delayed a long time, and prolonged the terme of the wicked: at length he will shew that although he waited for their repentance, yet hee forgot not their misdoedes, but registred them before him, and packed them vp vpon a great heape to increase the terror of his wrath.

The first hinderance is, the beholding of other mens ends. For when some men that haue liued a wicked and an vgracious life, & haue beene notorious sinners, even to the Worldward, so that every man could point at them: yet if vpon their death-bed they can say a few good words, and cry God mercy, and say their prayers, and forgue all the world: and so dye quietly, it is marvellous to heare how foolishly people of the world will exalt them and iustifie them saying: He made a very good end as any man could make, he died as quiet as a Lambe, and set all things in good order before he dyed. Wherevpon another wicked and monstrous

harlot



varlet is encouraged to sinne. For thinketh  
 he, such a man liued as loosely as I, or any man  
 else, and yet he made a very good end, and why  
 may not I doe so too? But alas these mens eyes  
 are bleared; for to die quietly is not to die god-  
 ly: to cry God mercy for fashion, is not to haue  
 God mercifull: to say a few prayers from the  
 teeth outward, is not to dye in the faith of  
 Christ: for many do all these, and yet dye mi-  
 serably.

The last let is, hope of long life: for while  
 men seeede and besot themselves in this hope,  
 they are drunken in sinne, and deferre the day  
 of repentance, as the rich man in the 12 of Luk.  
 dreaming of his long life, cast of all thought of  
 God, and the other life, and of Christs com-  
 ming, and of all good things, and said within  
 himselfe: Soule, thou hast much goods laid vp  
 for many yeares, liue at ease, eate, drinke, and  
 take thy pastime. Thus the bleare-eyed men  
 of this world, choake vp repentance, and quite  
 smother it, by doating themselves with hope of  
 long life. Therefore my deare brethren, I be-  
 seech you by the mercies of God, in the bowels  
 of Christ Iesus, that none of all these common  
 lets may stay you from speedy and vnfained  
 repentance, but that you may oversee them  
 all: Lest haply you being found without re-  
 pentance, and taken tardy in your sins, should  
 all



all perish, and be damned, according to Christs sentence. Wherefore in conclusion let vs with godly Ezechiah be afraid of Gods threatenings, sorrow aforeshand, stand in awe of God, examine our consciences, mourne for our sins, and lament inwardly, that when the wicked who haue swarmed in pleasure here below, shall enter into their eternall paines, we may then I say, there haue eternall peace and rest: that when Iesus Christ shall appeare from heauen with all his Angels, we may haue crownes of glory, and raigne with our God and our Saviour his Sonne, and all his Saints & Angels, in the midst of all ioy, in the heavens for evermore. To the which ioy he bring vs all, which hath so dearly bought vs, Iesus Christ the righteous. To whom with the Father, and the holy Ghost, be all honour, Glory, Praise, power, and Dominion, now and for evermore, *Amen.*

*FINIS.*



